

SSCI# 95-1356

Alpirez/DeVine/Bamaca

-- 8 June 1990, Michael DeVine, a U.S. citizen and long-time resident of Guatemala, is abducted and murdered by members of the Guatemalan Army. Several enlisted men were tried, convicted, and imprisoned for the murder. Captain Hugo Contreras Alvarado, the officer who led the killers, was also tried and convicted, but on the day of his sentencing (11 May 1993) escaped from the military headquarters where he had been detained.

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-- 12 March 1992, Efrian Bamaca, ORPA commandante captured in San Marcos Department. Bamaca is in good condition, despite a light wound to the arm.

-- October 1993, former Army specialists Francisco Solobal and Tiburcio Hernandez, both serving a 30-year sentence for their role in the murder of Michael DeVine, publicly claimed they had engaged in Army-run death squad activity and had information on clandestine cemeteries and jails.

-- Mid-April 1994, [REDACTED] reported that Alpirez, who was assigned to Military Zone 18 (San Marcos) in March 1992, [REDACTED] had personally interviewed Bamaca after the guerrilla's capture. At that time, Bamaca was in good health. Alpirez claimed Bamaca was subsequently taken away by military intelligence officers from the Armed Forces General Staff. He claimed he never saw Bamaca again.

Bamaca had been slightly wounded and cooperated with his military intelligence

(D-2) interrogators -- although information about arms caches later proved to be false. In April 1992, Bamaca reportedly was taken away in a D-2 helicopter and never seen by [redacted] again.

-- 11 November 1994, Ambassador Marilyn McAfee informs Jennifer Harbury that the U.S. government has no indication that Bamaca was alive much beyond the first few weeks of his capture.

-- 21 November 1994, NSC Advisor Tony Lake meets with Harbury in Washington. Lake gives Harbury an up-to-date assessment of U.S. government intelligence on the Bamaca case, affirming that the Administration has no information as to Bamaca's being alive and that the Administration has been informed, although the Administration cannot verify, that Bamaca was held prisoner but alive in July, 1992. Lake emphasizes that the Bamaca case is important to the Administration and that the U.S. government will continue working on it. The Administration will push the Government of Guatemala to work with the U.N. human rights verification mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) to investigate the case.

[redacted] a [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] said that Bamaca had been captured alive in March 1992, but that he is now dead. The officer who reportedly took charge of the interrogations was Alpirez, then third commander of Military Zone 18. [redacted] offered no information on how Bamaca died. [redacted] said that Bamaca had been captured alive and believed he was still alive 4-5 weeks later. [redacted] subsequently lost track of the case, but believed Bamaca had been killed.

-- 10 December 1994, President Clinton raises the Bamaca case with Guatemalan President De Leon Carpio in Miami at the Summit of the Americas.

-- 25 January 1995, [redacted] reported that a [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] in early December learned from [redacted] that "it was known within the senior ranks of the Army" that Bamaca was killed by Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, third commander of Military Zone 18 (San Marcos). [redacted] spoke in mid-January 1995 with a [redacted] who confirmed the allegation. (The National Security Council, in its chronology, said this information could not [redacted])

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[REDACTED]

be corroborated and was in conflict with previous information. The NSC directed a comprehensive assessment of all available information on the Bamaca case.)

-- 27 January 1995, The CIA completes the NSC-requested analysis and provides to the NSC and State. Included in the analysis was information regarding the 1990 death of DeVine.

-- 27 January 1995, Studeman requests CIA IG to review all of the facts underlying the Bamaca and DeVine cases.

-- 3 February 1995, CIA representatives brief committee staff directors regarding 25 January 1995 reporting that Alpirez killed Bamaca. They also notified Committee staff, for the first time, of Alpirez's connection to the 1990 DeVine murder.

-- 6 February 1995, Amb. McAfee demarches President De Leon Carpio regarding [REDACTED] and asks for thorough investigation. McAfee requests that the investigators reinterview Guatemala army officers present in the area where Bamaca was captured in March 1992.

-- 7 March 1995, Amb. McAfee meets with Harbury in Guatemala, informs her that "We have reached the conclusion that Bamaca is dead, based on the evidence. I am convinced he is dead, but I do not know what happened to him."

-- 10 March 1995, after a U.S. policy review of human rights in Guatemala found a clear pattern of continuing violations and lack of "substantial progress" on a number of human rights cases, including Devine and Bamaca, U.S. suspends last military assistance to Guatemala - \$200,000 in IMET (International Military & Education Training) funds.

[REDACTED]